

Message Text

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ACTION PM-05

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C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 3637
E
E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS IR NL
SUBJECT: DUTCH FRIGATES FOR IRAN

REF: A) THE HAGUE 3506; B) TEHRAN 6201

1. SUMMARY: DUTCH NAVY OFFICERS CALLED ON CHARGE
TO DISCUSS SALE OF DUTCH FRIGATES TO IRAN AND EMPHASIZED
THERE IS NO QUESTION REGARDING COMPATIBILITY OR INTER-
OPERABILITY OF US AND DUTCH ELECTRONICS SYSTEMS. THESE
SYSTEMS ARE KNOWN TO US OFFICIALS AND HAVE BEEN SATIS-
FACTORILY EXPLAINED TO IRANIAN OFFICIALS. WE
URGENTLY NEED GUIDANCE REGARDING THE RESPONSE TO MAKE
TO THE DUTCH. END SUMMARY.

2. REAR ADMIRAL LANGENBERG, DIRECTOR OF NAVAL
MATERIEL, AND COMMANDER VAN RAAY CALLED ON CHARGE
JULY 3 TO PRESENT DUTCH SIDE OF RECENT DISCUSSIONS IN
TEHRAN REGARDING THE PROPOSED SALE OF DUTCH FRIGATES TO
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THE IRANIAN NAVY. LANGENBERG BRIEFLY REVIEWED THE CAPA-
BILITY AND IMPORTANCE OF THE SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY HERE
AND NOTED THAT THE RNLN HAS TRADITIONALLY USED US
WEAPON SYSTEMS IN COMBINATION WITH DUTCH OR OTHER
EUROPEAN EQUIPMENT. HE ALSO SAID THAT THE DUTCH RADAR
FIRECONTROL SYSTEM IS WELL KNOWN TO THE USN AND IS IN FACT
BUILT UNDER LICENSE IN THE US FOR A USN SHIPBUILDING PRO-

GRAM. IN ADDITION, THE DUTCH FELT THAT ALL TECHNICAL QUESTIONS HAD BEEN SATISFACTORILY ANSWERED, BOTH IN WASHINGTON AND TEHRAN, AND THAT THERE WOULD BE NO DIFFICULTIES ARISING BETWEEN THE DUTCH SUPPLIED ELECTRONICS AND THE US SYSTEMS SELECTED BY THE IRANIANS.

3. NOW, HOWEVER, IT APPEARS THAT QUESTIONS WERE RAISED DURING THE RECENT MEETINGS IN TEHRAN REGARDING THE INTEGRATION AND COMPATIBILITY OF DUTCH AND US SYSTEMS. THIS CAME AS A SURPRISE TO THE DUTCH BECAUSE THE USN APPARENTLY WAS FAMILIAR WITH THEIR SYSTEMS BASED ON PRIOR DISCUSSIONS, AS WELL AS THE KNOWLEDGE THAT THE RNLN HAD SUCCESSFULLY INTEGRATED THE TARTAR AND HARPOON SYSTEMS INTO THE DUTCH ELECTRONICS ABOARD TWO GUIDED WEAPON FRIGATES.

4. COMMENT: IT IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY EMBARRASSING THAT WE ARE UNABLE TO PROVIDE ANY RESPONSE TO THE DUTCH, REGARDING THE US EQUIPMENT AVAILABILITY FOR THE IIN FRIGATE PROGRAM. THERE ARE SEVERAL POINTS OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE TO THE DUTCH: A) THEY HAVE BEEN SURPRISED AT THE CONFRONTATION CAUSED BY USN QUESTIONS ABOUT THE INTER-RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE DUTCH AND US ELECTRONICS SYSTEMS AND THEY FEEL THAT THESE SYSTEMS ARE WELL-KNOWN TO THE USN AND HAVE BEEN ADEQUATELY EXPLAINED BOTH IN TEHRAN AND WASHINGTON; B) THEY ARE TROUBLED BY THE APPARENT CONFIDENTIAL

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USN ROLE AS AN ADVISOR TO THE IRANIANS IN THIS MATTER AND RAISING QUESTIONS REGARDING THE INTEROPERABILITY OF THE ELECTRONICS SYSTEMS WITH THE POTENTIAL CUSTOMER RATHER THAN WITH THE SUPPLIER; C) THEY ARE TROUBLED BY THE PROPOSED MEETING IN WASHINGTON TO DISCUSS THIS SUBJECT FURTHER. OUR GUESS WOULD BE THAT THE POLITICAL LEADERSHIP HERE MIGHT DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE IN SUCH A MEETING, BUT THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL CERTAINLY IS OPPOSED.
BROWN

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